

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 NRC-05 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 OES-03 FEAE-00

DODE-00 ERDA-05 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

CEQ-01 EPA-01 /091 W

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R 020823Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL NAHA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

INFO SECSTATE WASH D C 1835

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB

OAC CAMP BUTLER

USAGO MACHINATO

18TH TFW KADENA AB

MARCORB CAMP FOSTER

COMFLEACTS OKINAWA

OAFO CAMP BUTLER

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O. 11652: NA; TAGS: MARR, JA

SUBJECT: HEXAVALENT CHROMIUM POT CONTINUES TO BOIL

REF: NAHA 439 DTG 280825Z AUG 75

SUMMARY: LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL PRESS CONTINUE TO HARP

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ON THE ARMY LEAKAGE OF ENGINE CLEANER FROM THE MACHINATO SERVICE AREA, ALLEGING THAT CHEMICALS HAVE CAUSED ILLNESS AND EVEN DEATHS AND THAT SIMILAR PROBLEMS ARE PRESENT AT OTHER BASES. THE LINE OF ARGUMENT IS NOW THAT THE RECENT MIKI AND SCHLESINGER VISITS HAVE RESULTED IN MORE EMPHASIS BY THE GOJ AND USG ON OUR MILITARY PRESENCE IN OKINAWA, MAKING THIS PREFECTURE THUS EVEN MORE OF A "VICTIM", AS THE POLLUTION INCIDENT PROVES. OKINAWA REPS ARE

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LIKELY TO RAISE ISSUE IN THE DIET. END SUMMARY

1. WHILE THE PRESS AND LEFTIST CAMPAIGN ON THE LEAK OF CLEANING DETERGENT POLLUTED WITH HEXA-CHROMIUM FROM THE U.S ARMY MACHINATO SERVICE AREA WAS SOMEWHAT LESS INTENSE OVER THE WEEKEND, THE ISSUE REMAINS VERY MUCH ALIVE. THE NEWSPAPERS ARE FULL OF REPORTS (SPARKED BY ZENGUNRO- THE MILITARY WORKERS UNION) OF INJURY, ILLNESS, AND DEATH ALLEGEDLY CAUSED BY THE CHEMICAL, CLAIMS THAT SIMILAR "DANGEROUS" SUBSTANCES ARE IN USE AT OTHER BASES, REPORTS OF INVESTIGATIONS (REALIZED, ABORTED, OR PLANNED) BY VARIOUS GROUPS, AND PROTESTS DELIVERED BY ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS. WE RECEIVED THE MAYOR OF NAHA FOR OVER AN HOUR ON AUG 29 AND HOUSE OF COUNCILLORS MEMBER KYAN FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS SEPT 2; A DELEGATION FROM THE PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY VISITED US ON AUG 28 AND HAD A BUS

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TOUR OF THE SERVICE AREA ON AUG 29.THE GOVERNOR HAS CALLED ON GENERAL ROBINSON.

2. ALONG WITH THE DEMANDS THAT THE U.S. MILITARY STOP DISCHARGING OR EVEN USING DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES, PROVIDE MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS, TREATMENT OR COMPENSATION TO ENDANGERED OR AFFECTED WORKERS, AND DECONTAMINATE POLLUTED AREAS, THE LEFTISTS CLAIM AGAIN THAT THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION MUST BE TO ELIMINATE U.S. BASES FROM OKINAWA ALTOGETHER. BOTH EDITORIALS AND THE POLITITICIANS WE HAVE TALKED WITH

ARE CLAIMING THAT PRIME MINISTER MIKI'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S VISIT TO SEOUL AND TOKYO HAVE RESULTED IN MORE STRESS BY THE GOJ ON DEFENSE, WHICH WILL PLACE MORE MILITARY BURDEN ON OKINAWA. THE LEFTISTS MAINTAIN THAT OKINAWA, WITH OVER HALF OF JAPAN'S AMERICAN BASES, WILL BE EVEN MORE HEAVILY "PENALIZED" AS THE GOJ "UNFAIRLY" SHIFTS THE BULK OF U.S. FACILITIES GRADUALLY FROM THE HOMELAND TO OKINAWA. INCIDENTS OF CRIME AND POLLUTION, SUCH AS THE HEXA-CHROMIUM LEAK, OR THE ONGOING

PROBLEM OF AIRFIELD NOISE, ARE GLEEFULLY POINTED TO AS "EVIDENCE" OF OKINAWA BEING MADE EVEN MORE OF A "VICTIM."

3. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT REFORMIST OKINAWAN REPS WILL RAISE THIS ISSUE IN THE DIET. (THE LOCAL LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS

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REPORTEDLY RESISTING THE CONVENING OF A SPECIAL PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY SESSION SPECIFICALLY ON THIS ISSUE.) WHETHER THE OPPOSITION CAN PLAY THIS ALL THE WAY INTO A SIGNIFICANT DIET ISSUE WOULD SEEM TO DEPEND LARGELY ON HOW LONG IT CAN KEEP THE POT BOILING DOWN HERE AND WHAT OTHER ALLEGED EVILS IT CAN TURN UP AT OUR BASES. UNFORTUNATELY HEXAVALENT CHROMIUM HAS NOW (ALBEIT TO A LESSER DEGREE) THE SAME VAGUE

EMOTIONAL SCARE VALUE OF DEADLY TOXICITY THAT NUCLEAR MATTERS
HAVE, SO THE ISSUE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE PRESSED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLLUTION, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NAHA00448
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750302-0818
From: NAHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750992/aaaaddsp.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 NAHA 439
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUL 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <18 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HEXAVALENT CHROMIUM POT CONTINUES TO BOIL
TAGS: MARR, JA, US, (SCHLESINGER, JAMES), (MIKI, TAKEO)
To: TOKYO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006